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WASHINGTON POST  
22 July 1986

## WASHINGTON WAYS

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A best seller it is not. Yet.

But "The American Hostage: To Be or Not to Be" could be one of summer's sleepers for Americans going abroad, whatever their destination or purpose.

There are 39 pages of basic travel safety tips, like avoiding taxi lines at hotels, varying locations where you flag a cab, watching to see if the same driver picks you up every day. And some not so basic: picking a code word by which your family can confirm your identity or condition; leaving behind with your family a tape recording of your voice; learning to detect foot, vehicular and fixed surveillance techniques by would-be captors.

There also are suggestions on what to listen for, smell and touch if you're blindfolded, how to leave a trail that somebody might recognize, how to behave if you're stuck in a black cell with only your mind to keep you company.

Written by security experts who learned their trade at the State Department, the Secret Service, Central Intelligence Agency and Department of the Army and who spent a total of 85 years "travelling, living and surviving on all continents," the book boils down to pure and simple survival.

"Survival before, during and after the fact of becoming a hostage," say the authors, who include **Richard Keiser**, formerly with the Secret Service as head of presidents Nixon's, Ford's and Carter's protective details; **Herbert F. Saunders**, a former senior official of the CIA; and **William J. Mulligan**, who spent 27 years abroad for the State Department.

The book is available for \$9.50 through Varicon International of Falls Church, a 13-month-old firm of security consultants.